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ABSTRACT

With more than 240 poems selected from 80 leading poets, this anthology is the first comprehensive collection of post-World War II Japanese poetry to survey all of the major tendencies and developments directly influenced by the war. Beginning with Nishiwaki Junzaburo (1894-1982), who studied Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, and concluding with Osada Hiroshi (1939-), the poems in the anthology trace the introduction and influence of such western traditions as symbolism, surrealism, and "Beat" poetry and the many advances made by women poets, as well as presenting a deep response to Japan's darkest moments and the regenerative powers of its postwar poets. All of the major poets of Japan since World War II are represented in the anthology. The anthology's introduction notes that nearly all the poets experimented with untried resources of the Japanese language itself, and they revolted against the rigid formal language devices of traditional poetry in which the structure was technically strict, intricate, and many-layered. Although the traditional (and impersonal) "haiku" and "tanka" are known to American readers and students of Japanese poetry, the anthology reflects the emergence of the poet's personal voice and presence in these poems which represent shifts in the language factors, purposes, and techniques in postwar poetry. (NKA)

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